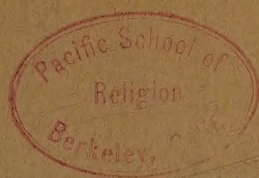


THE RELIGIOUS OUTLOOK

# The Student World

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April, 1921

# THE STUDENT WORLD

Serial Number 54

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The Student World is published in January, April, July, and October. The price of a single annual subscription, postpaid, is 1 shilling; 1 mark; 1.25 francs; 60 sen; or 25 cents, gold. Single copies are 10 cents each. Subscriptions may be sent to the office of any Student Movement in the Federation and this should be done when possible. See addresses on the third page of the cover. When necessary to remit directly to the office in New York, payment may be made in the postage stamps of the United States or Canada, by an international money order payable to the General Secretary, or by reply-coupons. A reply-coupon—*Coupon-Réponse Internationale*—may be purchased in many countries for six cents or equivalent. This coupon is redeemable in New York at five cents in postage.

Entered as second-class matter, May 21, 1909, at the post office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879

Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, Authorized November 14, 1918.

Published for the World's Student Christian Federation by Association Press.

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The general office of the World's Student Christian Federation is located at 347 Madison Avenue, New York. Cable address—*Forsec* (Western Union Telegraph and Cable Code).

The names of the various national and international Student Movements affiliated to the Federation, and also the addresses to which correspondence should be sent are printed on the third page of the cover.



# THE STUDENT WORLD

A quarterly magazine published at 347 Madison Avenue, New York, by the World's Student Christian Federation

JOHN R. MOTT, *Chairman and Editor*

H. C. RUTGERS, *Treasurer*

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VOLUME XIV

APRIL, 1921

NUMBER 2

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## Students and Christianity To-day—A Symposium of Statements by Leaders in Many Lands

THE timeliness of an enquiry into the present situation confronting students as it bears upon their attitude toward Jesus Christ and His teaching is too evident to need more than a word of explanation. Every thinking man must realise that the world is different in essential respects from the world of only seven years ago, and that religion as the deepest reality in life has of necessity been affected profoundly. Historians will doubtless look back to these years as constituting one of the acute crises in the moral and spiritual life of man. In retrospect the entire nineteenth century appears to have been like the laying of trains of powder which needed just the terrific concussion of the war period to explode. That explosion marked the culmination of a fierce conflict between rival ideals which had been waged for decades, not only among the various nations, but also within each nation. As a conflict between ideals this crisis has profoundly stirred student thought and life for the very reason that students live so largely in the realm of ideals. Hence it is not strange that in the reports from nearly all lands prominence is given to the revolt against standards of morality and faith, the restless demand for a "liberty" which few can define and the yearning for a religion that is marked by friendliness and reality. The only areas where students seem to have been comparatively

immune to the influences set in motion by the upheaval in Europe have been South America, South Africa, China, and portions of the United States and Australasia.

This study was undertaken not to bolster up old methods or formulas but to learn the facts and the experiences of the different Student Movements as a basis for meeting more effectively the moral and religious needs of present-day students. One surprising thing is that so great a degree of agreement appears in the conclusions reached in the most diverse fields.

## I

We shall now present the statements made by leaders of the different Student Movements in response to questions sent them by the editor of *The Student World*. Information gleaned from other sources also has been interwoven. The questionnaire sent out was simple. The first of the two heads was as follows:

I. What is the present situation facing the students as it bears upon their attitude toward Christianity?

1. What factors in the present situation—intellectual, moral, political, social, and religious—facing students in your country lead them honestly to question the adequacy of Jesus and His religion to meet their needs as individuals, and to form the basis for social and moral improvement?

2. In what ways do you find the attitude of students toward Jesus and His religion has changed in the last six years?

3. What are the chief currents of thought and activity which are impelling students toward Christ or repelling them from Him?

The replies received indicate that the difficulties which keep students away from Christ are less than formerly concerned with intellectual doubts. They feel that life is too earnest to warrant whiling away time on theoretical discussion and that they must get to grips with reality. Their doubts more often spring from distrust of the churches, which, however lifeless, they identify with Christ Himself, or they are sceptical as to the practicability and potency of Christianity in the industrial, political, and work-a-day life of the world, which has been stripped hideously naked of all semi-Christian veneer by the terrible experiences of the years just past. This is true not only in Europe but in other parts of the world. From Australasia comes this testimony:

"Following on the war period, in which people lived at higher



tension than usual, with greater concentration and fixity of purpose, there has been a stage of relaxation. In many of its departments life is in a state of flux. The uncertainty characteristic of such a state shows itself in the religious attitude of the average student. He is feeling his way towards something positive and definite, but he moves with uncertain steps. This uncertainty is not due, I think, to any generally felt intellectual difficulties. There are no theoretical barriers to Christianity, such as every student of two decades ago had to meet. The causes are to be found in other directions. First among these causes is the practical materialism prevalent in our age. The thinking youth, with some idealism, finds himself within a system, or system of systems, organised and sustained by the aim for money. He feels himself being drawn into it and finds it difficult to escape entanglement. Is he to compromise or is he to get out of the system altogether, or is he to remain within it and live a Christian life? This uncertainty is emphasised by certain facts which he observes. In the first place, he sees Christian men whom he has learned to respect, adopting the policy of compromise, baulking at Christ's great utterance, 'Ye cannot serve God and mammon,' and attempting that which Christ declared to be impossible. These are efficient, respected men, and he wonders if after all Christ was wrong.

"In the next place, he observes that organised Christianity is concerned greatly with questions of creed and dogma. He cannot understand this. He is looking for a way of life, and he sees the community seeking a way, and he becomes perplexed at the attitude of the Church. He is looking for religion, and he is given dogma. You confront him with theories of sin, of reconciliation, of the nature of the Godhead, but he cannot get interested in them. Is this, he asks, what Christianity means? If it is, he says quite frankly, 'I have no time for it.'"

In Norway we find a somewhat different situation:

"Formerly many of our students held an antagonistic attitude towards Christianity. Belief and knowledge were felt as contradictory forces, and the brighter students defended the latter. Immediately before and during the war a change, however, took place. The intellectual difficulties lost some of their weight. 'Christianity was as useful as any other life-hypothesis.' The antagonistic attitude reverted into agnosticism. And such is the situation of to-day. The interest in religious problems has grown. Students willingly lend an ear to Christian opinions set forth in student-clubs, and religion is debated in earnest. But the interest seems to stop with the debate. The number of Christian students is not greater than before, neither is there on the students' part any increased attendance at the 'academic divine services.'

"In this agnostic environment Jesus Christ is wanting in actuality. He may be mentioned as the Ideal, the richly-gifted man, but He is rarely taken into consideration, as He who has salvation to bring for the separate individual and for the social and international life of the nations.

"Consequently it is not so much intellectual as practical considerations which decide the position of Christianity. In markedly ethical characters the strong ethical demand may lead them on to Him. But, as often, it happens that this ethical impulse stops in self-sufficiency. For many, a longing for fullness of life may lead to Christ. 'I became a Christian to become a man.' But, as often, again, the result is that this need becomes identical with self-assertion, and Christ's teaching of self-denial then raises a barrier. Christ becomes 'the pale ascetic on the cross.'

"Lastly must be mentioned the Church and its preaching. A sharp dogmatic strife has blurred the outlines and augmented uncertainty for many students. For others it has clarified the object of the strife, and has led them to a fuller adoption of Christ. Lastly, as Christ has been preached, He very often has been portrayed as unmanly, and been forced into a religious frame that has made Him unreal.

In France the attitudes of the men and the women students differ more than one would expect. Of the men we are told:

"The attitude of students toward Christianity does not seem to be one of hostility but rather one of indifference. There is scarcely objection now to Christianity on the score of intellectual obstacles, the contradictions of science or philosophy and religion. Under the influence of the war, the French students seem in general to have become very practical, occupied particularly with the material tasks of reconstruction. As was expressed recently in an enquiry in a periodical neutral from the religious point of view. 'They are no longer dreaming.' Furthermore, the political problem and the social problem by their present acuteness seem to absorb in great measure the minds of the young people who have idealistic longings. If some feel indeed that the solution is in the transformation of the individual and that, as Baiburne says, 'There is no revolution except in the mind,' the majority which thinks less, is allowing itself to be guided by economic and material solutions, whether they come from the Right or from the Left. It must also be noted that the students do not naturally adopt an attitude toward Christ. For them the religious problem consists in their position with regard to the Churches: this is largely on account of the Roman Catholic education of the majority of our country. In the Church the majority see only the external forms or the collective aspect (the



Church conceived of as an organisation of social conservation of the hierarchic order). They belong to it often on account of these external elements or they shun it in the fear of an encroachment upon their intellectual independence or because of their distaste for a re-actionary institution."

The French women students' attitude is thus described by one of them:

"It is very difficult to obtain an impression of the situation as a whole; the cost of living, the difficulty of obtaining a position, a very distinct re-action, a desire for pleasure after years of privation, and a certain pessimism make material pre-occupations the predominant and sometimes exclusive, immediate concern.

"If, however, a certain facile and devout optimism is dead, the same does not follow with reference to all idealism and to all disinterested aspiration. For some time a number of Catholic students have been manifesting a redoubling of attachment to their Church; there is no university city which has not its Catholic Association or Associations, in the midst of which young women are going to obtain a more extensive knowledge of the doctrine of their Church, a surer and more vital faith. For those more individualistic persons whom ready-made solutions do not content, who are seeking outside all established dogma to obtain for themselves their personal convictions, difficulties of an intellectual order are very great and often occasion in their inner lives periods of long and painful trouble. The objections made will present themselves palpably in all countries, at least in all those of Latin civilisation; these difficulties cannot be imputed to a single philosophical system which might have the mastery over all minds. A mentality of a typical sort is that of the woman student who, repelled by a formalism or a mysticism which has no connection with life, and confusing clericalism and religion under the same suspicion, seeing no utility in religion, frees herself from it, throwing it aside like an outworn garment. Two problems pre-occupy all minds alike: the problem of suffering and the social question. The vision of the evils and iniquities of the world smites hearts and consciences. Capitalism, imperialism, exploitation under all its forms, are criticised; a real and intense desire for social justice is being manifested. At all times, the French woman student had a penchant toward intellectual and even metaphysical speculations. This tendency remains. I shall cite only one significant fact: where one would formerly have organised a circle for literary or philosophical studies, one creates now a circle on foreign policy."

But there are several countries where intellectual obstacles to-day are still as formidable as before the war. It is evident,

however, that everywhere the intellectual and the moral and social obstacles are intertwined. Sometimes men lack the courage and the will to apply Christ's principles, and in self-justification they make a show of intellectual doubt. As one would expect, the upheaval in Central Europe has left a very tangled religious and moral situation, which is movingly reflected in the following statements. In Germany the light and the darkness are blended:

"The prevailing relativity (due not so much to Einstein's theories, as to a religious eclecticism and moral laxity) is leading many students to long for an ultimate reality. In the personal moral life also, this same doctrine of relativity makes itself felt in the collapse of the former morality, which has been affected also by conditions (war, rationing, under-nourishment, revolution) as well as by popular ethical theories (Nietzsche, Ellen Key, and Blüher), and the effects of philosophical pessimism (Schopenhauer) and scepticism (Feuerbach, Vaihinger's *Als Ob*, 'As If,' Spengler's *Untergang des Abendlandes*, 'The Decline of the West'). This, in the case of many, leads in a negative way to practical materialism and to despair of the victory in the moral conflict, or positively to the re-actionary phenomenon of the strong, new, idealistic young people's movement (*Jugendbewegung*). Two ways lead from idealism to the quest for Jesus. Some take Him as a purely human example and leader, while others, after gaining a vision of the insufficiency of their own strength, lay hold upon Him in the Biblical sense as their Saviour and Lord.

"The political collapse is leading many students in their anxiety for the restoration of the Fatherland, in the national sense, to seek for religious strength (note, for instance, the re-birth of the old German religion and anti-Semitism); others go completely astray on the question of the right of national isolation and seek a new construction of mankind (pacifism in the sense of the Sermon on the Mount, of the Quakers, of Tolstoy).

"Unrighteousness in the social life, the vision of the impoverishment of a whole people as a result of the Versailles Treaty, and the hopeless misery into which students themselves are plunged are awakening in many a hunger for a better righteousness.

"The great mortality in the war has awakened the question of the life after death. There is a search for certainty in non-Christian directions (spiritualism, occultism, anthroposophy, cf. R. Steiner). The pseudo-scientific elaboration of the results of the science of religion has brought in a new religious syncretism (Buddhism, Neo-Buddhism, Taoism, Mysticism, Tagore, the modern worship of Wodan, the new development of Roman



Catholicism). This newly awakened quest, which provokes to such study in the attempt to find a new religious certainty, forms in many the point of contact for the presentation of the Gospel of Christ."

The following paragraphs by *Lic.* Erich Stange form the illuminating supplement to the preceding statement by Pastor Humburg and Dr. Weise:

"During recent years, there have been in our universities a new sort of students, men of twenty-eight, thirty, and thirty-two years of age who were torn for years from their studies by the war. Their attainments, despite the haste with which they are obliged to conclude their studies, are much higher than the average. Their inner life, moreover, is characterised by an unusual maturity, deepened especially by the soul-searching experience of the war.

"The younger element, however, is beginning to be prominent once more, coming with youthful faces and with childish *naïveté* beginning to pay heed to the world of problems. Whilst the older students are for the most part very silent men, the younger manifest the liveliness of an expanding intelligence.

"This external difference is not without its influence upon the religious situation. More than formerly, we have among our students men with fixed ideas more or less inaccessible to external influences. That has imposed pronounced restrictions on our work among them, but has given our Movement a splendid succession of Christian characters from among them and so made possible evangelisation of students by students in a manner never before seen.

"There is being manifested at the present time a change in the attitude toward religious questions which has been in preparation for ten or fifteen years. A generation given to materialism, which sought the solution of the world riddle in materialistic monism, was followed slowly by a period of active quest after religious truth. Yet, of course, that generation was heavily burdened with scientific and philosophical prejudices which blocked the way to piety. But an address which Dr. Heim delivered in 1905 on 'Do Unsolved Problems Constitute a Hindrance to Belief?' showed that intellectual doubt marks an entirely normal moment in the beginning of personal Christianity. That point of view prepared the way for a new element in religious thought, which has since become the decisive element. To-day there is a decided rejection of all 'intellectualism.' While intellectual doubts have by no means disappeared, they are not decisive. An understanding of the irrational, the wonderful, the mysterious, and with it of the essence of religion, has grown surprisingly.

"That people are not brought directly to Christian experience

in this way needs scarcely to be emphasised. On the contrary, the longing for the mysterious is now leading into devious ways: the anthroposophy of Dr. Steiner has become the vogue. This abnormal emphasis upon mystery tends only to a superficial religious susceptibility.

"From what has been said it follows that the view of life of academic circles is more idealistic than formerly. In particular among the young people, those circles with idealistic tendencies, which since 1913 had been united under the name of *Freideutsche Jugend*, there has been growth. The call of the spirit has grown constantly more compelling. Here also, however, there has been a decisive change in the past years. Before the war, it was characteristic of the idealistic youth to make the indefinite quest for truth their goal and to reject the adoption of any definite ideal. For a consciously Christian Movement, almost insuperable obstacles are produced by such a tendency. Recently, however, a pronounced change has come to pass. A 'will to action'—not without influence from the war years—has come to the front. Only few are they who to-day take an attitude of deliberate neutrality toward life ideals. The majority see themselves forced to a decision. The political upheavals in Germany at the same time forced the social movement into the foreground.

"This produced a re-action upon the relations of Christianity and socialism. There was formerly a strong tendency to avoid any direct effort to evangelise the labouring classes. To-day, on the contrary, among Christian students also, there will doubtless be a future only for that element which sees, in a determined effort to preach Christianity among workers, the only possibility of solving this most difficult question. The will to action is going to prevail here also.

"From the standpoint of the Christian Student Movement what we have said leads to fair hopes. More than ever does there exist a future for a Student Movement in which, as in ours, there lives a determined will. The hour of 'indirect methods,' with which the German Student Christian Alliance was never really in sympathy, is passed. The modern student now allows himself to be won only by force of decision.

"Another characteristic of our students is now to be observed only in the germ: a strong demand for fellowship. It springs partly from the idealistic movements, partly from the experiences of the war. The longing for united worship is nourished especially by the growing appreciation of the mysterious element in religion. Thus in four or five universities, students have been meeting before the beginning of the day's work in a chapel or in a lecture room in order to hold a united devotional service—a proceeding which until a few years ago would have seemed



unbelievable. It is possible that from this will grow a new development of church fellowship, the consequences of which for the spiritual and religious life of Germany cannot be estimated."

Still further light is thrown upon the situation by these discriminating comments regarding German women students:

"The great political upheavals of our national life, its spiritual and material sufferings during the years of the war, and above all the very difficult economic situation of the present time have exerted a strong influence upon the women students' world, particularly upon its soul life. There are many problems being developed: political, social, international questions are keenly pre-occupying the minds of women students. In the case of a part of them, this great stirring of their spiritual life has given rise to a pronounced religious tendency; while others, through the pressure of their material needs and through re-action against all the privations which they have undergone, are turning entirely away from the religious life and are living only for their work and their pleasure.

"Genuine religious longing is still very weak and obscure. There is, however, a striving after life, after personal experience. The students, therefore, are turning extensively away from the Church, because to them it seems dead, and are seeking new ways of their own toward religious experience. Since the quest after truth and after an answer to religious and social question has become very wide-spread, fewer women students than formerly pass indifferently by the person of Jesus. He stands more truly than four years ago in the forefront of the intellectual struggle. It may indeed be said that the pure Gospel, the figure of the Saviour Himself, is directly attracting many women. The failure of the Church, however, and of Christians in many respects in the past makes it difficult for many women students to find the way to Jesus."

More chaotic is the situation depicted by our correspondents in Austria:

"The outward advantages of the new situation for our work are political and press freedom and the fact of a homogeneous state (one nationality). The first means open doors for the Gospel and the second simplified methods, increased working capacity, and more concentration. The main inward advantage is the increased earnestness in a part of the student body, a seeking for God, an awakening of the dormant moral and spiritual senses. Austria was before the war a sleeping giant, sleeping the sleep of self-satisfaction, self-seeking, and self-enjoyment. There was no room for God. Its spiritual senses were atrophied. It considered itself a Christian nation; it was

quite unconscious of its utter heathenism. It has been aroused rudely out of this sleep. The effect is two-fold: on the one hand the symptoms of repentance and turning to God; on the other hand (unfortunately predominant) bitterness, blunting, and increased godlessness. But the difference is this, that whereas before this godlessness was something passive and even unconscious, it is now bold, determined, and aggressive.

"A lack of aim and vision dominates the student body. They are like a flock of sheep in a fog. All ideas and ideals are chased after in a wild headlong race—pacifism, anarchism, Tolstoyism, nationalism, all grades of idealism, monism, anthroposophy, mysticism and even occultism, everything, excepting Christ. They seem to have no hold whatever, no ground under their feet. Furthermore, instead of having, as in Protestant countries, a fairly homogeneous mass of students of fairly equal upbringing in morality and religion before one, on which one can work systematically, one faces here a sea of fishes of all varieties and habits. And the old prejudice against Christianity has on the whole remained, largely because the Church so misrepresents Christ.

"There are many 'idealists' among the Viennese students, most of them Jews. They are convinced that Jesus is not the solution of all problems. Those among them who join our Bible study circles, interpret the words of Jesus only as a confirmation of their own opinions.

"The anti-Semitic students are either holding strictly to the Roman Catholic Church (mostly from political motives) and most of them hope for a restoration of the Hapsburg Dynasty; or they are dominated by the idea of nationalism and by Teutonic (Aryan) race pride. They have not learned through the war that faithfulness to one's own nation is not an adequate substitute for religion, and that hatred towards other nations poisons the soul.

"One thing is common to the students of all persuasions: the bitterness about the present state of affairs and the feeling against those who, as they believe, caused it, namely the Governments of the Entente states, the governing classes of society, the capitalist system, the Church, or the Jews. Such bitterness rouses party spirit, envy, and disinclination for hard work.

"The economic situation of the students is extremely hard. This fact has led many a student to try to earn his bread by manual work; some carry on illicit trade.

"Nobody opposes seriously the widespread unsatisfactory conditions with regard to sex problems.

"The usual forms of Christianity are not respected by our students, with the exception of a small number of Roman Catholics. The Roman Catholic Church is determined only to



reign and not to educate: but Protestantism is little more than salt which has lost its savour."

The report from Sweden is instructive and, in contrast with the preceding statements from Central Europe, gives the impression of calm detachment:

"Evangelism in the Anglo-American sense is scarcely possible. Add to this a strong trend towards theoretical philosophy—especially at Uppsala—and opposition to any positive religion, a theoretical agnosticism strongly re-enforced by natural science (Einstein's theory of relativity) and, as a general feature, the frequency of speculation, often combined with ability to think systematically but seldom with any psychological insight. To such students Christianity is smothered under theoretical problems.

"Indifference in matters Christian is great; the Christian students encounter in their work a passive resistance, a 'benevolent neutrality.' The person of Christ is not a living fact for these neutral students. And if the last six years have altered their attitude, it is to greater indifference. Pleasures are repelling students from Christ. The increase of pleasure is perhaps a result of the war. On the other hand, the force that makes young men and women Christian is that either the Christianity they have been taught or the idealism of youth is turned in a personal direction to Christ. There is very seldom any sort of revival. Sincerity and honesty in seeking life's meaning and redemption have brought most students to Christianity."

This statement from the Netherlands condenses much in a brief compass:

"There are many reasons why students are not Christians. Many students do not know exactly what Christianity is. Some think that one must sacrifice the intellect in order to be a Christian and naturally refuse to do so. Others are practically materialistic in their attitude. Others identify the Church with Christianity and because they are disgusted with what they have seen in some special church they do not want to have anything to do with Christianity. Also there is often not much difference between the lives of Christians and those of others, and those who profess Christ fail to attract the others. If we all did not fall so far short of the ideal, there would be a better understanding of what Christianity really is."

The situation in Switzerland is well reflected in these paragraphs:

"All our work is directed more or less exclusively towards evangelisation. Even our social work seeks to sustain the con-

sciousness of its origin in our Christian spirit, and we are solicitous not to let it outgrow our power of spiritually permeating it.

"The failures may be attributed partly to the rather intermittent zeal of our members; to the barriers our strong individualism erects between souls; to the prevailing materialism, which is both a re-action from the hardships of the past years and a result of these constant difficulties and pre-occupations; partly to the fact that Christ is still too much veiled or misrepresented by rites, dogmas, and prejudices which are repellant to many students. Personal intercourse, conversations, lending of books, social help, invitations to the Bible circles, lectures, Christmas festivities, such are the means of evangelisation used by the Association.

"The fact that in our country the students do not live in colleges but lead a 'civilian' life, and that their time and thoughts are absorbed by multiple interests and duties, renders their work among their fellow-students more difficult. The Students' Restaurants and *Maisons d'Etudiantes* furnish, therefore, excellent opportunities for bringing Christian and non-Christian students into closer contact."

The appeal of material prosperity and self-indulgent hedonism appears to be more intense among students in certain countries than ever before. It has been especially clamant in Japan and Italy. We quote from the Italian statement:

"A theoretical materialism which is common among the half-cultured classes and a form of Hegelian idealism (a refined atheism) which is in great vogue among the most cultured amount practically to the same thing as an obstacle to Christianity. The repudiation of Christianity by the Socialist party and a strong tendency of the same sort among Republicans restrains many from giving any consideration to such an affair as religion. Certain aspects of the life and conduct of the Roman Church turn many away from it who still remain convinced that there only is veritable Christianity to be found. On the other hand, the small Protestant missions, all of them supported by foreign money and reflecting all the principal divergencies of Protestantism and all the ungenerous rivalry of the Churches in England and America, are not in a position successfully to contest this presumption.

"But none of these difficulties are new here, nor are they severally or all together comparable in gravity to the great obstacle to Christianity in Italy, sensuality. I quote from a little pamphlet by a well known Roman priest: 'Noteworthy is Green's affirmation: "The Anglo-Saxons have to overcome their pride. the Latins their sensuality, before they can attain a moral per-



sonality." It is certain that in Latin lands certain exigencies of their ethics alienate from Christianity a great part of the middle classes.'

"It is hardly necessary to say that the vast majority of the students in Italy are of the middle class. It is not of that class alone one can predicate sensuality in the specific sense of the word, and every class is about equally characterised by a kindred defect, namely, practical materialism. In some degree this has been intensified by the war and the experiences which have followed it, at all events to the extent that all are engrossed with the problem of making a living and finding a place for themselves in a world in which the old order has been partially destroyed. But a practical materialism has always been a characteristic of the Roman people and of most of the races that have peopled Italy. To give it a less opprobrious name, it may be called a sense for the practical—a keen instinct for utilitarian ends, often without discretion in the choice of the means apt for attaining them, or without the perseverance which is necessary for success.

"The 'chief' thing which repels students from Christ, is theoretical and practical materialism. Even the things that Christianity promises are not sufficiently alluring, even if they are not discounted by scepticism. Indifference is the common response to our appeal.

"But the consequences of the war are in part at least favourable to Christianity. There is a tendency to turn to religion. To some extent this is taking the form of re-action from modern liberalism, but where one man is re-actionary in the conservative sense, five are hopefully looking for some new secular order, such as religion has not brought about in the past and, to their thinking, does not offer to effect in the future. To all such religion is the great incumbrance."

The situation in Japan also merits extended quotations to make clear the extraordinary ferment of ideas at work among her students, some of which fortunately are impelling men Christward:

"Japan had but little contact with the World War except through the expeditions to Tsingtau and eastern Siberia. The students generally were not so much influenced by this limited direct contact as through eager study of the extensive literature growing out of the war which dealt with the struggle between classes, the contest between labour and capital, and the general social upheaval. An important factor in deterring students from the adoption of Christianity, or in weakening the faith of those who have adopted it, is their reading of many Continental writers, especially Dostoévski, Turgénev, Ibsen, Zola, and Strindberg.

"There are three attitudes which students are taking towards Christ:

(a) The prevalence of hedonism as a demoralising factor can no doubt be traced largely to the business 'boom' during the war. During the past few years, the educational authorities have found it difficult to secure strong candidates for the teaching profession, because the numerous new business industrial concerns have created an unprecedented demand for men, more particularly for recent graduates of the colleges and universities. Very often they experience a severe conflict between the ethics of business and their own religious ideals.

(b) Toward the end of the war iconoclastic ideas emerged. Freedom from tradition, freedom from the past, became the slogan of hosts of students. This attitude toward all social problems is particularly noticeable in their conception of the relations of capital and labour.

(c) Closely related to the above is the idea prevailing among many students that all religions are stereotyped. All religions alike are spurned for what is conceived to be their 'ready-made' character. While they may have met the needs of past generations, they are inadequate to the enormously complex demands of this day. One of the strong motives in the conversion of the older leaders of the Church, those who were converted in the early period of Meiji, was the purpose to save Japan and her people. The patriotic appeal was powerful and afforded them real inspiration. This we find is very rare among the young people to-day. They are influenced not so much by the nationalistic or patriotic appeal as by the individualistic. They are more given to introspection. When they come to Christianity they come in order to relieve their inner conflicts. The expression commonly used to describe this is 'to stare at one's inner self.' But it is encouraging to note that there are many students who are struggling with their problems and are striving to solve them with honesty and with the spiritual point of view despite the materialistic, demoralising atmosphere in which they live. In the leading literary magazines for students and in many modern novels we find men of this type introduced as the heroes of the stories.

"While it is true that the introspective and individualistic tendency is strong among some, it is equally true that the modern social upheaval, the persistent problems of industrial life, as well as the pressing questions of international relationships, have stirred the minds of Japanese students. To illustrate, I may mention the formation of the *Shinjin Kwai*, New Men's Association, under the leadership of Dr. S. Yoshino, professor of politics in the Imperial University of Tokyo. The members are more interested in social than in religious problems."



The attitude of the Chinese students in Tokyo toward Christianity is naturally somewhat different from that of the students in China itself, but it is on the whole much the same. The marvel is that their attitude still remains so favourable despite all that has happened in China and in Europe since 1914. We quote this epitome of the opinions of the students themselves:

"Most Chinese students believe that Christianity is sufficient to meet all the demands that may be placed upon it. There is little opposition. On the contrary, students in their desperation have conceived the idea that Christianity can help them. They have learned to trust the teachings of the Christian missionary, teacher, and doctor, especially because of the social service rendered by them, particularly of late in the conduct of famine relief. They believe that service for others is definitely linked up with the doctrine of Christianity. As a consequence, many are tending toward Christianity because they can see no other way to identify themselves with public welfare work.

"Chinese students believe in the beneficent activities of the Church as presented in the Young Men's Christian Association, and other similar organisations, but the motive and spirit behind such presentations they know little about.

"Among the barriers to their becoming Christians are the intellectual inefficiency of the clergy, conduct by church members incompatible with the ordinary standards of right and wrong, and the excessive indemnities demanded from China by the so-called Christian powers.

"Through their own press and the study of foreign languages, students have had new worlds of thought opened to them. They have read about the achievements of nations considered Christian. But the injustice practised by such nations toward China rankles in their minds and inclines them to think that if Christianity when believed in by great numbers of people prompts such drastic action on the part of the strong over the weak, it is not so worthy of consideration as they had supposed."

The great complexity of the situation prevailing amongst the students of India is suggested by the following comments:

"Diverse forces have been playing on the minds of Indian students during recent years. On the surface of things, it would seem that the Christian Church has been sadly discredited, and the difficulties in the way of students accepting the Christian faith greatly aggravated.

"Many forces are hindering the spread of organised Christianity. There is first of all the prejudice of educated Indians against accepting the faith of the ruling power. The apparent collapse of

the so-called Christian civilisation of the West has been a cruel disillusionment. Nations that were thought to represent Christianity were seen to be guilty during the War of the grossest excesses of selfishness and cruelty, frequently under the guise of religious conviction. Indian religious ideals exalted self-negation and sacrifice, rather than self-assertion and dominance. The reports of returned sepoys from Europe regarding conditions there are highly condemnatory. Students are quick to say that if Western civilisation represents Christianity, it has nothing that Indians need or desire.

"Recent political events have increased the tension. Certain of the laws enacted were asserted by extreme educated Indians to be an insult to the honour of the country. Growing out of this agitation came the Punjab disturbances during which a number of Indians were killed by the military. The terms of the Turkish Treaty were very objectionable to the Moslems and to many Hindus, and were looked upon as an attempt to crush Islam in Europe. Hindus joined with Moslems in the effort to secure a revision of the treaty. The failure of Government to alter the Turkish Treaty and to denounce the action of the military in the Punjab issued in the well-known Non-Co-operation Movement led by Mr. M. K. Gandhi, which has sought to paralyse Government, and has demanded complete independence within two years. Students were asked to leave their studies unless their college authorities refused all Government support. Disorder prevailed and strikes were frequent. The Moderate Party, led by some of the ablest men, did all in its power to offset the Radicals, but student opinion in India as elsewhere, follows the Radicals.

"The majority of the Christian community have come from the depressed classes and have ever been fearful of the implications of Home Rule. They have had little part in the agitation of extremists, hence Christians in general have been branded as Westernised, oblivious to the aspirations of nationalism, and no longer truly Indian. There is a growing tendency among students, however, whether Christians or not, to identify themselves with the Nationalist Movement and to follow the Radicals.

"In the field of labour, Christians have again come in for reproach. Indian labour has grappled during the past two years with the problems which have grown out of fifty years of labour agitation in other lands. Labour unions, the strike, and the sympathetic strike are now common in all industrial centres. Leaders of labour are usually extreme leaders in politics as well. Christians have not entered the industrial field to any great extent and consequently are not found championing the cause of labour. Missionaries as well as Indian Christian leaders are accused



of ignoring these most vital problems. Fortunately, there are a few exceptions, both European and Indian.

"The consciousness of intellectual equality with other nations grew rapidly when the achievements of Indians in the field of letters, science, and art received world-wide recognition, as in the bestowing of the Nobel Prize upon Tagore, the scientific discoveries of Dr. B. C. Bose, the attention given to Indian philosophy in Western universities, and the fact that Indian students could hold their own with Occidental students.

"Indian students in the West have been quick to observe the degradation in the city slums, under the very shadow of Christian institutions. Class distinctions in England and race feeling in parts of America have not escaped their notice. They contend also that the returned missionary depicts only the darkest side of Indian life. Books have been published enlarging on "Hindu superiority," supported by the statements of prominent Englishmen who laud Indian civilisation.

"But the outlook is not all dark. A leading Indian Christian recently said that the West had nothing to offer to India which she could not do without, except Jesus Christ. Such is the reasoned conviction of a growing number of thoughtful men. Mr. Gandhi, the leader of the Non-Co-operation Movement, recently avowed before a huge audience in South India that Jesus Christ was his guide in life and that his policy of non-resistance was taken from the Bible. (Many question his interpretation, but few deny his sincerity.) Another extreme leader stated in public that he never understood Jesus Christ until he saw Him manifest in the sacrificial life of Mr. Gandhi. The President of the new Bombay Legislative Council in his opening address declared of one chapter in the Bible, that 'every verse is a key to the science and art of self-government'."

The demoralising influence of recent events has been powerfully felt in the Near East:

"The faith of Armenian students has been shaken by the catastrophe that has befallen their nation. Since the Armistice the conduct of all the Allies, but that of the French in particular, has made them profoundly cynical and pessimistic. They feel that the ideals of Jesus are impracticable and unrealisable; they find no evidences of His power in the march of history.

"Turkish students, the sons of a race that has never consented to regard itself in any other light than that of conquerors, are depressed by the downfall of their country; as a whole their national leaders seem to encourage an attitude of blind hostility to Christianity, even though they cannot offer a vital faith in

Islam. Moreover, this same leadership has been using the most unprincipled methods to defend the Turkish atrocities of the war and since; this has undermined the power of moral discrimination among all classes of the population.

"Greek students have been less affected than the others. The injustices, cruelties, and sufferings of the war, however, have led many of them to doubt all such principles as the Providence of God. Jesus' authority has consequently suffered also."

The religious background of the students in South Africa is strikingly different from that of the students in non-Christian lands:

"They have for the most part grown up in an atmosphere saturated with Christian habits and ideas and they have a traditional respect for the Christian religion and its claims. There is no competing religious faith and the intellectual difficulties arising from science and philosophy are less acute than in many other countries. The majority of those who reject Christ do so either through sheer indifference or because His demands are too exacting. The widespread spirit of worldliness begotten by the prosperity of recent years has also deadened their minds to the teachings of Jesus. Still another hindrance in South Africa as everywhere else is the inconsistent living of professing Christians. This is especially true where the nominal Christians condone things which the conscience of non-Christians condemns. All such failings stand out vividly in the intimacy of our student life. Some fail to understand the real meaning of the Gospel, for their ears have become dull through frequent repetition, but when it is brought home to them in less conventional phraseology they frequently respond gladly.

"Three influences are impelling students toward Christ: their hope of help from Him in the solution of the perplexities of the sex problem, which has been frankly discussed in recent years as a result of war experiences and of the phenomenal increase of medical students; the realisation that the social degradation following on poverty, vice, and drunkenness must seek a remedy in Christ; the evident need of resorting to Christ to realise the brotherhood of man and peace among the nations."

British students seem to have been driven by the searching experiences of the past seven years to a keen realisation of their own responsibility to carry out Christian principles in the social life and in the political policy of the British Empire. Among them the spirit of humility and penitence in face of their own and their fellow-countrymen's shortcomings seems more marked than among the students of any other land. This spirit was



most impressive at the Glasgow Conference. Speaker after speaker laid bare the sins of which the students as individuals and as citizens of a great Commonwealth had been guilty, and the devotional periods were marked by an outpouring of confession and petition to God as the sole source of healing and strength.

In countries where the more radical movements for social reconstruction have unfortunately been sponsored by men alienated from the Christian Church, and even from Jesus Himself, the Christian students and other believers have tended to hold aloof from social movements and to emphasise rather the nurturing of individual character and the leavening of a comparatively small circle with Christian teaching. In Great Britain, and to a certain extent in North America, there has fortunately been no sharp schism between these two groups, and furthermore, in both countries an overwhelming majority of those who guide the thinking of the Student Movement look upon it as a primary duty to apply the spirit and principles of Christ to social evils, in other words to realise the Kingdom of God, as far as in them lies, among men here and now. The student conferences in Great Britain and America, pre-eminently those at Glasgow and Des Moines, have evidenced this tendency and purpose. It is the deepening conviction of many American and British students that in Christian principles alone is there hope for a cure of both social and international ills, and it is this hope that constitutes the strongest single appeal of Jesus Christ to them.

While the leaders in both England and America place emphasis upon this appeal they by no means ignore the fact that the Gospel must now, as in the beginning, challenge the individual conscience and transform the individual life.

The unfailing potency of Christ to appeal to the individual seeker is well expressed by the women's Student Movement of the United States in this paragraph:

"Once students see Jesus Christ as a vivid, irresistible person instead of a vague, theological problem or a far-off giver of laws, and get the conception that God is a 'Christ-like God,' the way is straight for a personal relation with such a God in to-day's world. Most students who are not following Jesus Christ are prevented by distorted conceptions of Him and of what is involved in being a Christian. There are also groups confused by

the teachings of spiritualism and mysticism, and by casual contact with Oriental philosophies. But the honest, clear-eyed way in which students, who are willing to think, are facing questions of religion is also of great significance."

"In the men's Movement some of the most effective evangelistic work has been accomplished by men who have frankly dealt with sex problems and have led students to accept Christ as the only power who can save them from such temptations. But when able students are won by this means they are not satisfied until they press on to appropriate also the completer Gospel in its application to social as well as to individual life, so that among the most fruitful evangelists to students are men who are profoundly concerned with bringing the principles and power of Christ to bear on social and racial problems.

"Parallel with these hopeful tendencies in the United States there are two contrasted influences at work which hinder the progress of Christianity. The one is an ultra-conservative moral and theological attitude which frowns upon certain amusements and magnifies certain extremes of Christian doctrine. The other is a very liberal, not to say, lax view of Christianity and traditional moral standards as repressive of that free satisfaction of individual appetite and ability which modern psychology and social science are said to endorse. This tendency has been strengthened by some professors whose teaching of the relativity of moral standards as well as of knowledge leads students to think that the old sanctions have no rational authority. These demoralising influences, however, reached their climax a year ago and to-day more sound, constructive tendencies are gaining the upper hand. The results of the many largely attended gatherings for the presentation of Christ are evidence of this assertion. Not only did a larger number of Associations conduct special series of evangelistic meetings last year than for many years past, but the university authorities and the most influential students gave them the heartiest welcome."

The situation among students in South America is in some respects unique. On the one hand they have been cut off almost entirely from the direct impact of the tides which have disturbed Europe and other parts of the world, and on the other hand they have been reared under the shadow of a powerful Church which they respect as a force making for social stability but which has no controlling power over their individual lives. They do not so much despise as ignore the Church and the claims of Christ, but when Christ is presented to them in practical terms and as the effective means of victory over their



temptations, they are quick to give an appreciative hearing, and if the messenger has won their confidence, their sensitive natures often bind them to him and ultimately lead them to the Master Himself. Among the impediments to the acceptance of Christianity in South America is the vogue still enjoyed by Herbert Spencer and Positivist philosophy and also the suspicion that even genuine Christianity is impotent to master the passions of competing nations and classes.

From Canada comes one of the simplest but most impressive statements: it supplies indisputable evidence that the life and teaching of Jesus Himself still remain the most magnetic influence to draw men to Him:

"Students who are honestly and thoughtfully studying the religion of Jesus are not questioning its adequacy to meet their needs, or to form the basis for social and moral improvement. Rather, they recognise it as the only adequate basis. They find that individuals and governments do not really believe in the workableness of the Christian ethic, or that they are unwilling to run the risk of trying it out. The only inadequacy is in men's lack of conviction.

"Students to-day are discussing Jesus and His religion frankly and freely, under all kinds of circumstances and with all kinds of people, instead of hesitatingly and with embarrassment as a semi-private subject. It forms a basis for good comradeship. They attend Bible Study groups because they are keenly interested, not as a matter of duty. They are getting opinions on religious subjects, thinking for themselves—daring to reject creeds and dogmas which were to them inexplicable, difficult, or repellent, and unrelated to their experience—and are substituting a working basis which is to them practical, understandable, and in harmony with life as they know it. They are seeing religion as a way of life instead of as a matter of theology. They are finding it a normal thing, rather than a strain upon their souls. In a word, close, careful study of the life and teaching of Jesus, under conditions which demand free expression of opinion and honest thinking, is the chief activity impelling students towards Jesus. One repelling influence is the spirit of intensely restless activity which has not yet passed away—a mad desire to avoid thinking at all."

## II

Thus far we have been considering the replies regarding the general situation as it affects the attitude of students to Jesus

Christ. Now we are ready to consider what presentation of Jesus Christ and His principles has been found best adapted to meet the situation. For the most part the statement from each country is left to speak for itself.

The questions sent out regarding this second aspect of the study were as follows:

II. What presentation of Jesus Christ and His principles do you find adapted to meet this new situation?

1. In meeting this situation, what in the former practice of your Student Movement do you find effective to-day? Why do you consider it still effective? What changes have you found necessary to meet the new conditions?

2. What specifically are you doing to give students the chance to think through questions as described in I?

3. In the past the Student Christian Movement as a whole has given a primary place to the presentation of Jesus and His claims upon individuals through personal and public evangelism. Do you consider that such evangelism ought to be given an equally important place to-day?

4. What considerations are chiefly influencing representative students in deciding them to become Christians?

5. In building up young Christians in faith and character, what have you found the most effective means for men and women students of different temperament, background, and stage of development?

How have you co-operated with the Churches or other agencies to this end? If not, what are the obstacles and objections to co-operation?

In general there has always been a necessary difference in the presentation of Christian truth in countries with ancient, conservative, or established Churches and countries where the Church is young and free and religious life has been more dependent upon lay than upon clerical activity. In the first group have fallen most of the countries where the Roman and Greek Catholic Churches have held sway. It is, however, a further evidence of the breaking up of old moulds that even in such countries the methods used in the newer Christian fields have begun to find welcome. The replies make it clear that the more aggressive and highly organised methods are by no means confined to Anglo-American communities; they also show that in Canada and Australasia more reliance than formerly is being placed on personal contact and the cumulative educational process.



Australasia. "My own opinion, formed by years of close contact with students, is that if a student is to find his bearings he must be confronted with Christianity as primarily and essentially a way of life. The great facts and principles which Jesus taught and lived, must come to him directly and challenge him—God, the Father, the Kingdom of God, Faith. He must be asked to test the truth of these facts and principles by trying them out. The necessity of confronting the students with the character and teaching of Jesus, as interpreted in modern terms, should control the policy of the Movement. It should be the guiding principle in working out plans of Bible study and evangelism. If this central necessity shapes all our plans and organisation, the response of students will be ready and full; if it does not, then, however perfect our organisation, we shall not grip them."

Canada. "Informal discussion groups are largely replacing meetings. The student is more eager to hear what his friends have to say than to listen to a speaker, unless it be an outstanding one. He is not willing to accept opinions that he has not thought through himself. There is a deeper sense of responsibility and self-reliance.

"Broadcast methods, advertising and campaigning, are being replaced by quieter personal appeals and discussion groups. This holds true for the enlistment of members and of financial gifts, as well as for religious effort. The membership fee has been abolished by many Associations, and money is raised by contributions. In many cases a formal declaration of membership itself has been done away with, the only 'joining' being active participation in fellowship and work. An earnest attempt is being made to simplify machinery, or to dispense with it. Many of the former activities which involved much time and money are being considered irrelevant. Always we put foremost a study of Jesus and fellowship groups for prayer and discussion. The most necessary thing is absolute honesty and readiness to face any question of any student. Conferences are proving of much value in focussing thought and supplying the encouragement and help of friendship.

"In one college this winter, the students had a week of prayer in which definite time was given daily by individuals and groups to the consideration of life's problems.

"Revival meeting methods are in disrepute. Students are laying the emphasis, not on any moment of decision, but rather on the persistent living of life in the light of a deepening understanding of the meaning and reach of Jesus' teaching. There is also an insistence upon the application of Christian principles to social institutions as well as to individual life, and an impatience

with the mind that can overlook the inconsistencies between current religious theories and our practices.

"Our students do not use the term 'becoming Christians' very much. But very many of the most thoughtful,—to whom the familiar phraseology and practice of Christianity made little or no appeal—are being stirred by the sincerity and idealism and practical effectualness of the religion of Jesus, when it is stripped of a superimposed theology, and are frankly going out to their life-work as His followers.

"Some churches have student Bible classes, and give attention to students in Sunday sermons and week-night socials. The chief obstacle to closer co-operation would seem to be the fact that the most vital part of the student's development comes through his fellow-students, when he is amongst those of like problems and like stages of thinking with himself—when he is free to express himself without reserve. He is so much in the minority in our churches that he cannot move things, and he instinctively is a mover. His whole philosophy of religion demands that he be able to try out his theories in practice."

South Africa. The Movement in South Africa finds that the well-tested methods still yield good results:

"We still find that the direct presentation of the Gospel message in its fullness is the most potent influence in changing the lives of students. Evangelistic preaching going hand in hand with personal work has not been superseded. This has very specially been proved in the daily meetings for prayer and decision held between Ascension and Whitsuntide, which have always proved fruitful in bringing men to yield to Christ. Following on this, the study of the life of Christ has been of great value.

"Again, addresses on special topics have been given to the students by men of standing. Such have been 'Christ and the Social Order,' 'Native Education,' 'Genesis and Modern Science,' 'The Rise and Significance of the Student Movement,' 'The Relation of the Student Christian Association to the Church.'

"The large majority of our students become church members. To many of them, confirmation is a period of earnest thought when they enter into a clear and definite decision for God.

"The ministers of the churches have gladly given us their support in addressing student meetings, or acting as leaders of normal classes. The Association seeks to cultivate a spirit of loyalty to the churches and at the same time to get the Church to regard sympathetically those students who are critical of her traditional methods and standards."

France. The replies with reference to French students show that similar methods appeal to both men and women:

"It is in the presentation of the Christ, of the God of Jesus, in the exposition of a personal religion, the object of which is a Person and not a Church, that evangelisation has its greatest chances of success. Every time that we have employed this method our comrades have told us that it was for them a veritable revelation. The world has need of men and women who have been born anew. The Christ remains before all the one who transforms our evil human nature into the nature of children of God. We run the risk of neglecting this central theme. Nothing would be more dangerous than to make of the Gospel a moral or social idea, however high, and to forget that it is also a force of redemption.

"The methods employed are as different as the individual students approached. The Christ of the Gospel attracts equally the mystic and the speculative, the active and the intellectual, social temperaments and individualistic. We do not co-operate directly with the Churches because of the distrust of students with regard to the Church, but the members of the Federation quite naturally show more attachment to their churches and several under its influence have decided to serve the Church directly as ministers or missionaries."

"To meet the present situation among women students, only personal influence is proving effective; the French woman student is too complex and too varied a being to be accessible to influence of any other sort. It is necessary with tact and love to adjust the presentation of Christianity to each particular case. Nevertheless, study circles and apologetic addresses as preparation for individual work are of real value.

"In order to meet the needs of the present situation we draw attention to Christ, who can renew individuals and societies; we urge students to study His life; we present the Christian life as a life of close personal relationship with Jesus Christ and through Him with God."

China. The article by Mr. Yui, printed elsewhere, reviews the experimentation in methods which has been carried out by the Chinese Student Movement. We need only supplement it by the testimony from a worker among Chinese students in Tokyo:

"I fear we have not been pioneers here in the matter of developing any helpful new methods of reaching the students. It is not that the former methods are out of date and unsatisfactory. Any failure is due rather to our limited and perfunctory use of the old methods. The varied activities of the Association are still eminently fitted to win the confidence and friendship of these men, and form the best possible basis for work with individuals, which is still the pre-eminent method, if we can only get Christian men



to prepare themselves spiritually and intellectually to undertake it. The Bible study discussion group, stimulating addresses with the evangelistic aim constantly in mind, and periodic evangelistic campaigns, if properly prepared and followed up, are still very effective."

India. "Personal friendship with students and a frank presentation of Christ are as acceptable to-day as ever, if the Christian worker is sympathetic. Soon after the Punjab disturbances, evangelistic meetings were arranged in two centres of North India by non-Christian gentlemen and the speaker was a missionary. In one place, seven hundred educated men sat in the compound adjoining the Hindu temple for three successive evenings listening with profound respect to the presentation of Christ.

"There is no room to-day for the old method which sought to uproot non-Christian religions by destructive criticism, and there are many aspects of organised Christianity in India to-day that will have to change before it will appeal to educated India; but there has never been a time when students were so open to the appeal of Christ Himself, when presented in the spirit of sympathetic friendship."

Japan. The Japanese Men's Movement like the Chinese has gleaned ideas from all parts of the world but has modified them freely to suit its own conditions as the following statement by the General Secretary, Mr. Saito, indicates:

"Bible study is still the main avenue of approach to vital Christianity. But the Bible must be made more vital; modern social and international problems must be presented in relation to the ideals of the Scriptures. One of the common criticisms of students against the Churches is that they fail to link themselves with the problems of the day. Recently I saw a Bible class conducted by the Dean of the College of Medicine of the Northeastern Imperial University. We need more such lay leaders who can interpret the Bible in a way that appeals to student hearts and minds.

"Our Movement has made inadequate efforts to lead students to think through the questions described under I, though some Associations afford opportunities. On my tours I constantly hear the frankest discussions of personal, social, and religious problems. By taking the attitude, not of a teacher, but of a learner, I have often been able to help to a Christian solution."

"For some time we have not promoted large evangelistic campaigns. It is difficult to find leaders with the right spirit who understand the psychology of students. Often the numerous

converts cannot be held loyal to the Church because of what they consider to be the inadequacy of what the churches seem to stand for.

"One must satisfy the social interest of students in attempting to lead them to Christ. Students interested in social problems have become Christians merely through reading articles by Professor Yoshino, which were Christian in their motive although saying little about Christianity.

"Even those who put Christianity in the group of stereotyped religions, and dislike creeds, generally acknowledge the life-giving power of Christ. We are doing little to win students who are inclined toward Christianity through its mystical, artistic, and æsthetic appeal.

"We are far from satisfied with our attempts to build up men in faith and character. We are striving to effect more intimate contact with the Churches, but speaking frankly yet kindly, the fault is not all on our part; pastors and foreign missionaries have failed to some extent to keep pace with progress in other than the religious sphere and are often blamed for being out of date. It is confessedly hard to understand the psychology of the youth of to-day. A sympathetic approach on the part of the Church as well as of our Movement is absolutely necessary if we are to win the educated men and women who might be such strong factors in building up the Kingdom of God."

The Near East. From the dark background in Asia Minor break flashes of Christian hope and confidence:

"The principles and methods of the Student Movement are just as appropriate and applicable to-day as they were five years ago. In dealing with secondary school boys, however, I find that they are particularly attracted by the idea of a programme of symmetrical development.

"We have had addresses both in the Association building and in the schools themselves, by such men as Dr. Eddy, Mr. E. M. Robinson, Mr. Henriod, and by Greek professors of high standing. We are also holding a series of 'Open Forums' on topics vitally affecting the application of the Gospel to social and personal life. All these methods have been effective; we have been at it for too short a time to make an accurate judgment as to the best among them.

"Students are being impelled toward Christ by these considerations: their country is going to ruin; all human remedies have failed; Christ remains the only hope; Christ possesses evident fitness to meet the needs of the Age; they have witnessed how Christ has made bad men good.

"We have found the most effective means of building up young

Christians in faith and character to be: personal Christian friendships and interviews, public addresses and open forums, Bible and prayer groups, retreats and conferences."

Italy. The analysis of the situation confronting the Movement in Italy suggests the peculiar difficulties which confront all the Movements where the Roman Church is dominant:

"Our Student Movement in Italy has since its inception consistently sought to awaken in students a sense of the importance of religion in history, of its importance to the human individual in all times, and of the superiority of the Christian religion (by interpretation of Christianity in general terms, and by Bible study when the students were able to bear it). These methods have never proved largely effective in leading students to a deeply personal religious life, and still less to active participation in the life of the Churches. It is our hope, however, that they serve to rid their minds of the prevailing prejudice against religion and to make it possible for them to accept Christianity whole-heartedly when a deeper experience prompts them. We see no way to gain a hearing except through cultural studies which command the intellectual respect of university men.

"For some six months past, finding that many students were weary of barren intellectual discussions, and that not a few were desirous of a warmer religious tone, we have encouraged the local groups to reduce the number of general lectures and to replace them with informal "conversations," conducted by a competent leader, but with encouragement for all to participate actively. These *Conversazioni* have in fact proved generally acceptable, and they have often brought forth revelations of intimate religious experiences which are more moving than many a learned discourse. They enable the members to know one another more intimately, and they reveal to the leaders the confusions of thought which need to be clarified. Wherever they begin these conversations are likely to lead to the deepest questions, and to such deep religious difficulties as a lecturer would hardly be bold enough to choose for his theme. Much proclaimed lectures by eminent men we purpose to use for drawing men into the society; the intimate conversations for keeping them in.

"Our methods have never been such as could be called 'personal or public evangelism.' We believe that the situation here does not now admit of it. We should be much better off if it did. But we are already attempting it to some extent in the *Conversazioni*, and anticipate that a greater emphasis upon this side may become possible; and perhaps the cultural methods upon which we lay emphasis might profitably be adopted elsewhere.

"We have not been led to consider the necessity of employing different means for men and women. The women students' or-



ganisation is in a certain degree independent, and in some places the women have meetings apart, but usually they join the male students in the same meetings.

"For obvious reasons we do not co-operate with any of the Churches, Protestant or Catholic. We must be scrupulous not to give colour to the suspicion that we are nothing else than an instrument of propaganda for the Protestant missions. On the other hand, though our members are in the majority liberal Catholics, the Catholic churches (parishes) as such will have nothing to do with us, and the Catholic Church as a whole has never done better than to tolerate us, and now seems hardly inclined to do that."

Argentina. The cultural kinship of Argentina and Brazil with the Latin countries of Europe appears in the statements:

"As yet there exists no distinctively student Christian movement in Argentina. The work for students has been developed since 1909 through the Young Men's Christian Association. The present membership of one thousand in the University Division is a medley of older high school boys, university students, and young professional men. Several Argentine Association secretaries and promising assistants have been recruited through this work. Student leaders have made an incalculable contribution by directing the moral and spiritual activities. Helpful literature has been prepared and distributed, including a translation of *The Social Principles of Jesus*, by Rauschenbusch.

"The first approach to students has been made through an extensive programme of activities including the annual reception for new students; summer encampments and conferences; good literature in Spanish and French; the study of social and moral problems and the Bible through congenial groups; Sunday afternoon lectures with discussions; and personal direction in service particularly in behalf of homeless and abandoned boys; all activities being permeated by persistent and prayerful personal work.

"Manifestations of applied Christianity, such as the general programme of the Young Men's Christian Association, the educational work of the Argentine Philanthropic Schools, and the social work of the Salvation Army, are an irresistible apologetic in Argentina. The Man Christ Jesus is as yet unknown and unhonoured among students. The human elements in His character attract. The social principles of Jesus likewise awaken interest. The presentation of Jesus through the promotion of constructive service which meets recognised human need, undoubtedly demands greater emphasis at this time.

"Public decisions for the Christian life among representative students have yet to be recorded. In a dozen instances where

Association members have been developed to the point of acknowledging discipleship, personal work by secretaries has been a determining factor. Besides these men, scores of schoolboys and students are being prepared for discipleship through their Christian Association interests and relationships.

"Our efforts have been with young men out of touch with the Church, and there has been no co-operation with the churches. A few evangelical pastors have delivered addresses to students, but presentations by Christian laymen are far more effective. Native pastors, while sincere, are generally inadequately equipped intellectually. It is not our purpose to proselytise. The primary objective is for more and better disciples of Jesus. The Association secretaries who are working among students are individually, however, identified with the Spanish Evangelical churches."

Brazil. "There are so many reasons why men are embarrassed by a public presentation of Christ that the personal method must be used. Men are hampered by the attitude of their friends, by family position, by prejudices, and by pride. The private interview gives a man opportunity for self-defense, a prerogative greatly prized by the Brazilian."

Sweden. The first section of the statement from Sweden has prepared us to expect in the second section the statement that

"Though there is a gradual change in Christian ideas, the situation is not radically new in any respect. Our methods of work consequently have not been altered. Swedish students would resent an attempt to force new spiritual life where it did not come of itself.

"'The Spirit bloweth where it listeth.' We are doing nothing specifically to give students the chance to think through questions. It is only when we receive visits from certain foreign speakers that we have carried on so-called 'evangelism.' The chief cause for this is probably to be sought in lack of response to such a method of work in the national character and student life. The young men and women, schoolboys and schoolgirls who have become Christians, have done so without any special method, by growing up in the Christian communion as afforded to them first by the Christian movement in boys' and girls' schools and later by the Student Christian Movement.

"That this produces results, is chiefly due to the fact that our nation is fairly united and homogeneous throughout, and that we have had the benefit of a steady political and social development without crises. This is probably the reason why the Swedish Church is a Church of the people and our Student Movement has co-operated with it with good results."

Norway. "Our central endeavour is to represent Christ as the disquieting reality whose teaching and life have saving power to an active life of service, to represent Him as the One who makes possible the highest, most intense life-unfolding. To 'stand fast in the Lord' must be revealed as of real and intrinsic worth for life. Preaching and life must give witness that Christianity is a religion for men.

"To this end, we depend upon regular larger meetings but equally upon Bible study, arranged so that the different faculties meet separately. Several of our Student Movement men have delivered speeches in the great common student organisation. We have also invited students in general to large meetings where we have put religious problems under debate. Besides these meetings we have separate meetings for men students, called 'Problem Exchange', where subjects such as: 'God's Providence', 'Will every one be saved according to his creed?', 'Christ-belief', have been discussed. Similar subjects are also debated in smaller circles and at our yearly Easter retreat, where the most interested members meet to discuss ways and means. We are thankful that these efforts have recruited new students for active Christian work.

"Students are in a favourable, though agnostic frame of mind, which makes evangelism very urgent. The situation is opportune for evangelism on a broad scale. But whatever is won through evangelism must be carried further through personal work. Only so can lasting effects be obtained.

"Formerly it was most natural for us to orientate our preaching of Christ on a broad apologetic basis. The needs of to-day impel us to a positive accentuation of the central Christian truths.

"The paths to Christianity are many. Some students are led on by the need for a comprehensive view of life-problems, and find peace in the Christian orientation. Others, reared in Christian homes, are led by their search for the Ideal, and discover it in Jesus. And others, weighed down by their own powerlessness, turn for salvation to Christ. So we adapt our message and approach to meet these various needs."

Germany. The German Student Movement is still placing emphasis upon quiet, intensive methods, but the lessons learned in the war work are impelling it to branch out into social work and the more extensive use of literature and into fraternal relations with other student organisations:

"Our old method of work (evangelisation and Bible study) is still effective, especially as it has become more frequently possible recently for us to carry on evangelisation in the lecture rooms of the universities. But the dismembered condition of life to-day compels us to seek new ways in order to attract wider circles.



Among new methods are small Bible circles which do not function under the name of the Movement but are led by Student Movement members, the co-operation of Christian students in social work, conscious participation in student representative assemblies (for example, in the re-organisation of the Court of Honour), morning devotional services organised by our members, and united participation in the Morning Watch in lecture rooms or chapels. Special addresses and conferences have been designed for different faculties, such as the large morning service in the Michael's Chapel in Marburg.

"An opportunity for orientation in the questions mentioned under I.1 is given in largest measure at our conferences through discussions under the leadership of specially qualified professors (for example, on 'Tolstoy,' 'Theosophy,' 'Idealism,' 'Absolutism,' 'Christianity,' 'The Theory of Relativity,' 'The Problem of Sin') and in our evangelistic addresses in the universities. In order to make thorough discussion possible, we have divided the great main conferences into district conferences. Besides, these questions are treated thoroughly in our literature, *Furche*, various pamphlets, *Stimmen*, for example Dr. Heim's *Ungelöste Fragen* (Unsolved Problems), Dr. Weise's *Pazifismus und Christentum*, and Spemann's *Idealismus*.

"The success which these evangelistic addresses have attained in the past year has convinced us that we must bring this method still more to the front.

"The recognition that the present needs of the people can be relieved only through men who live in the power of God, the consciousness of personal participation in united guilt, the feeling of inability to fulfill one's life mission without salvation from passion and sin, are bringing many students to the decisive question regarding Christ. The decision will finally always lie in the fact that a student, out of the demands of his conscience regarding guilt in the sight of the Holy God, lays hold on Christ as his Saviour and is thereby made fit for service in His Kingdom.

"The essential means for the upbuilding of young Christians are the Word of God, prayer, and fellowship. Thus arises the necessity of a proper relationship to the parental home, loyalty in one's calling and in one's study, and self-sacrificing collaboration in the Kingdom of God (through the German Student Christian Alliance, the Bible circles, the Young Men's Christian Association, the anti-alcoholic movement, and the purity movement), and such social work as juvenile court assistance, the lodging house problem, lectures for workmen."

It is interesting to compare this statement with that regarding German women students:

"What our women need is leaders who are themselves vital

Christians, who have a broad and deep understanding of the great questions of the time, and who seek with courage to solve them. Because the religious quest of the present time is so intense, we regard serious Bible study as an urgent necessity. To a greater extent than formerly we are undertaking evangelisation work in the universities, through which we hope to reach wider circles. In the forefront of all this work must stand Jesus Himself. What many young women students are now longing for amidst the distress of the present time is inner peace and power, and so they make Jesus the Lord of their lives, often without any accompanying acceptance of dogma.

"In some circles we work hand in hand with pastors and professors, in others less or not at all. In general we can say of our work just now: the harvest is great. What we lack is the means necessary to open up the work as vigorously and widely as we ought. We are certain, however, that the Lord of the Harvest will help us also."

Austria. When one considers the overwhelming odds against which the Student Movement in Austria has always had to contend and more than ever, during the past seven years, the statement which we have received from there is a fresh proof of the indomitable quality of their faith:

"Our Student Home and Holiday Camp are necessitated by the economic situation of the students and are an indispensable preparation for deeper service. Such help begets confidence and is the most effective introduction to the truth of our great message. We should magnify Christ in His full import for all situations of public and private life; not only as the Lord and Saviour of those who call upon Him, but as the King and Judge of the world.

"This is not the time to prove that faith and science can be reconciled, but that the old Gospel is still as old-fashioned and unbearable as it has always been, but also as powerful.

"There will be much to learn from the old prophets; more still from John the Baptist; and most from our Master Himself. He attracted and won by the kindness of his personality, through healing and through helping; but His demands were sometimes unbearably hard.

"Work in Austria means resistance unto blood. Let no man enlist for this field unless he be willing to enter into the full fellowship of the sufferings of Christ. If Austria is to live, some of her children must go the way of death."

Great Britain. The manifold methods found effective by the Student Christian Movement in Great Britain and Ireland are too well known to call for detailed description. More reliance is

placed upon friendship and the infusion of Christian knowledge gradually flowering into faith and decision than upon spasmodic and high pressure methods. The study of the Bible still holds the first place. The range in courses is constantly being extended but the attempt in all of them is to keep the student close to reality. The change of the basis of the Movement to a more experimental view-point indicates the temper of the British student mind. This does not indicate less earnestness or consecration but rather an impatience with forms and professions which do not correspond with conduct and conviction.

The pre-eminent place occupied by social and international problems in the minds of students as reflected in the Glasgow Conference and as described in the first section of this survey has naturally tended to shape the presentation of the Christian message, but care has been taken to insist that social regeneration can be brought in only through the lowly doorway of individual repentance and dedication.

In past years the British Movement has not given so prominent a place to so-called evangelistic meetings as some other Movements, but the remarkable results following the Cambridge Mission of 1920 have led the Movement to place fresh emphasis upon this method of bringing students face to face with the claims of Christ. The plan used at Cambridge of parallel meetings led by representatives of the leading Church groups working in the closest sympathy may be suggestive to other Movements.

United States. The methods used by the American Student Movement are likewise no doubt fairly familiar in other countries, but it should be emphatically stated that the American Movement is ceaselessly experimenting with new methods and varying its emphasis. The wide extent of the Movement and the many different groups which compose it make it necessary to utilise all sorts of methods, so that it is a mistake to think of it as depending invariably upon evangelistic campaigns and Bible groups. The concern over social, industrial, and international problems generated by the war has led to a stronger emphasis upon the social application of Christian truth. The response to such appeals when made by men who are authorities on social problems as well as aflame with love for Christ has been tremendous. The



strength of the appeal lies in the fact that it combines the demand for personal consecration and missionary service with the demand for the rigid application of Christian standards to social, international, and inter-racial situations.

One of the newer methods which has been most widely used in America is the conduct of open "forums" for the discussion without reserve of religious and social problems. The key to success seems to lie in the ability and the persuasive spiritual quality of the leader.

One index of the vigorous religious life maintained throughout the American Movement even during the war period was the unflagging missionary interest and giving. Following the war, a further powerful missionary impulse was generated by the Des Moines Student Volunteer Convention in January, 1920.

Only second to the thousands of Bible and discussion circles as an evangelistic force must be reckoned the summer conferences and leaders' retreats where the flame of devotion and service is fanned in the breasts of the leading Christian students and professors from hundreds of institutions. The past few years have been a period of adjustment in the relations between the Church and the Student Associations, and while they are not yet entirely satisfactory, they are becoming steadily more harmonious. In a number of state universities the plan of correlating the work of denominational "student pastors" under the general auspices of the Student Association has passed the experimental stage.

#### CONCLUSION

On the whole, the review of the many communications received from the different countries and recent letters from the leaders of the various national Student Movements in the Federation afford ground for real encouragement. The massing of the difficulties, the faithful presentation of unsatisfactory conditions, and the discerning and discriminating critical estimates of attitudes and tendencies constitute in themselves an element of hope, because they reveal the significant fact that distributed all over the student world are workers and leaders who are in touch with the situation, who are pondering the facts, who are piercing beneath the surface to discover difficulties and to deal with them constructively. It is also an occasion for profound gratitude that

we live in a time when the ethical and religious facts and spiritual developments of student communities the world over are so intimately known and, therefore, when it is possible to bring helpful influences to bear wherever needed. The very existence of the World's Student Christian Federation with its many vital national links affords opportunity and facilities for bringing to bear personalities, messages, and vital spiritual processes on areas of need and opportunity.

It seems to be the universal testimony, moreover, that the students of all lands are more open and accessible to-day to the message and messengers of Christ than at any time in the past. What is even more significant is the fact that in nearly all countries students seem to be more seriously attentive to the note of reality in religion than in other days and than is the case probably among any other class of people. One receives the distinct impression that there is in the present student generation on almost every hand a teachableness, an eagerness of quest for light, united with a disposition to pay great prices, if need be, to find liberating and vitalising truth,—and this is most certainly a precursor of something far greater and better for the religious life of the universities and colleges of the world.

# Some Aspects of Student Evangelism in China

By DAVID Z. T. YUI

(This article by the General Secretary of the Student Christian Movement in China is of special value because of its instructive conclusions based upon a frank acknowledgment of failures no less than of successes, during a period of moral and political upheaval, analogous to that now being experienced in many other countries, and also because it shows how ideas and methods originally adopted from Western countries are being recast so as to fit the conditions of Oriental students. In China, at least, it is evident that the Student Movement leaders still believe as fully as ever in the efficacy of the recognised methods of presenting Christ and His message.—THE EDITOR.)

SOME careful observers have remarked that the students of China are the most patriotic of her 400,000,000 people. Doubtless, the students of to-day are fired with very intense patriotic zeal, and are willing to sacrifice everything for the good of the country. But they are feverishly restless in mind and spirit. They are deeply swayed by the tides of new thought, and are rushing forward on the wave of a renaissance. They are not so submissive as formerly. They turn with extravagant expectations to science and reasoning. Nevertheless, in science and rationalism alone, they have found nothing capable of satisfying their deepest longings. Because of this, and of the apparent hopelessness of the political situation in the country, many of them are showing a tendency toward religion, and are seeking the help of a higher power. They have also a feeling of isolation from the rest of the people, whose sympathy and support they seem to have lost. A sense of loneliness possesses many a student mind.

This knowledge of the student situation and the student mind as a back-ground will enable the reader to grasp the full significance of student evangelism in China at this hour and to appreciate the several features which will now be touched upon.

A. Friendship. By experience, we find that in order to win a student permanently for Christ we should try to form a friendship with him. But care should be taken that he does not decide for Christ simply on account of our friendship. Our genuine friendship, like Christ's friendship for ourselves, should be, however, a factor in his decision. This mutual friendship can be developed through at least the following ways, which have more or less been tried out: teaching classes or games in their schools



which afford opportunities for contacts; personal calls arranged through perhaps one or two Christian students in schools where there is no opportunity for teaching; invitations to them to come to the Young Men's Christian Association to hear well-known speakers, followed up with calls; promoting and teaching games or English at the Association; promoting and arranging trips or hikes to interesting places, factories, or other schools; presenting or simply calling attention to literature which will appeal and prove helpful; introducing leaders whom they like to meet and discuss matters with; personal acquaintance with each student's needs and real efforts to help meet them.

B. Bible-Study. We used to think that the Bible might be too deep or technical for beginners. This theory has been exploded. We start beginners with the Bible. Those who have tried other books do not get so much satisfaction. True, we should perhaps not begin with the Old Testament, or the Virgin Birth, or the Miracles, or the Resurrection. Nor should we adopt the method of argumentation, much less the lecture method. Nor should we study the Bible with no reference to everyday or modern life and its problems. We should study the life of Christ in its relationship to the life of the student, of the community, of the country, and of the world. It is not the historic but the living Christ whom we try to lead the students to get acquainted with, and to accept as personal Lord and Friend and Saviour. The truths taught by Jesus transcend time. The core of the best modern thought is still derived from His teachings. We don't need to claim this, but it becomes evident in our studies. Students are encouraged to draw their own conclusions. Much guidance is always available. Experience shows that when the Bible is thus studied in relation to modern life, individual as well as corporate, it invariably generates enthusiasm and yields results. We are making some attempts to produce literature which will help our studies of the life of Christ, but we do not allow any other literature to take the place of the Bible in the classes for beginners. At the same time we are using other literature to advantage.

C. Type of Message. In teaching a student, we generally lead him from the known to the unknown, which makes it easy for him to understand. This principle should be followed in

our Bible-study classes, in our personal conversation, and in our evangelistic messages. We should also lead him from the thing he is interested in to another in which he is interested either not at all or not in the same degree, and at the same time from a thing of less importance to another of greater importance. The thing which captures the attention of our students to-day is, doubtless, the salvation of China. They will sacrifice everything they have to obtain some means whereby China may be saved and made strong and wealthy. They have examined and perhaps even tried various methods, and have found them wanting. They have not given up, but are earnestly continuing their quest for some key. How about Christianity? How about the living Christ? Is He also helpless in facing the present situation in China? These are their questions, and they are asked with real expectation. For our people are beginning to realise that the only sure means of saving the country is to raise the moral character of the people. Such character cannot be found in an evil people. We proclaim confidently that it can be built up successfully through the love, power, grace, sacrificial life, and saviourhood of the living Christ. The steps in the argument, then, are these: no country can be permanently and truly saved unless her people are found with strong moral character. No people can have moral character unless the individuals are men and women of moral character. Finally, no man or woman can have moral character without truly professing Christ as personal Lord and Saviour. Therefore, the salvation of China after all must begin with the salvation of the individual.

D. Prayer-Meetings. Another effective means in student evangelism in China is prayer-meetings by Christian students and workers. The large volume of prayer going up to God especially before and during the evangelistic meetings assures God's working with and through us. These prayers are a blessing to those who offer them as well as to those for whom they are offered. They make those who pray feel that they have a real share in the evangelistic effort, and their faith is strengthened. Then, those for whom these prayers are offered will consciously or unconsciously feel the Spirit of God working in their hearts, which they can hardly resist. The spirit of God is released through the prayers of faithful Christians to work in the hearts

of the students in which already a deep yearning exists. We have learned not to allow organisation, machinery, and other necessary preparation for the meetings to crowd out the prayer-meetings or rob them of a large place during the campaign.

E. Kinds of Meetings. Roughly, there are three kinds of evangelistic meetings, which may be briefly described as follows: (a) "Harvest Meetings." In a number of mission schools, religious work is being systematically done among students. In addition to curriculum Bible study, and attendance at religious meetings and services, effort is being made on the part of the Christian teachers and students to promote and conduct voluntary Bible-study, discussion groups, prayer meetings, personal work and social service projects. Once or twice a year, "Harvest Meetings" will be held at which the non-Christian students who have been much prepared will be given opportunities of signifying their decision to become Christians. Such meetings are for the students of one school. In nearly all these schools there is a strong and active student Young Men's Christian Association. The results are usually quite satisfactory.

(b) Evangelistic Campaigns. A campaign of this kind ordinarily includes the students in the entire city from mission, government, public, and private schools. Not infrequently, meetings for other classes of people are held at the same time. Much preparation is required. At least one evangelistic leader is secured probably from some other place or country whose name will attract attention, and who has pronounced evangelistic ability and strong Christian character. Much machinery is needed to plan for the campaign and to undertake the follow-up work. It is essential that all the churches in the city be united in the undertaking.

(c) Week-end Retreats. For obvious reasons, the evangelistic campaigns cannot be held frequently. During the past few years, we have been experimenting with week-end retreats, which thus far have proved exceedingly inspiring and resultful. The students of many government, public, and private schools are free from Saturday afternoon to Monday morning. Usually, they do not know how to spend this time profitably. Oftentimes, they drift into harmful pursuits. In the week-end retreats, we invite a small group of students, especially those who have been in touch with Christianity, not to exceed twenty or thirty in num-



ber, to spend the week-end together in some quiet, attractive place. There, we open our hearts to one another, have the freest kind of discussion along constructive and spiritual lines and thoroughly enjoy our fellowship together. It is important that we secure for these retreats appropriate leaders. In nearly every case, genuine decisions are made for Christian living before the retreat closes. Those who have attended the retreats cannot speak too highly of the rich blessings received. They require almost no machinery, and little expense, and the results are usually permanent.

F. Follow-up Work. An account of the stages in our experience may be illuminating. At first, we used to allow the results of evangelistic meetings or campaigns to take care of themselves. The importance of follow-up work as such was not real to us. Later, we learned, by disappointing experience, that we must do it in order to secure the desired results. Still, no adequate provision was made, and the follow-up work continued to be inadequate. Then, we saw that in planning for an evangelistic campaign, we must definitely include follow-up work, and see that arrangements of the proper scale were made. But still we found that our follow-up work did not measure up to the needs. Thus to our surprise, time after time the plans have fallen down or been quite inadequate. What are we to do? The campaigns in other respects are more than satisfactory. Now, we plainly see that in planning for evangelistic campaigns, we have begun with the wrong end. We should begin with the plans for the follow-up work, and then shape the campaign accordingly. This is only a method of work, and still, from the view-point of conserving results, it is most important. In other words, we believe not only in the importance of doing follow-up work but also in planning for the follow-up work first of all. It is only in this way that we shall ever be able to care for those who make decisions during the campaigns. We find we must exercise every care to introduce immediately those who make decisions to the pastors of the churches of their own choice; and not only to lead them to become baptised Christians but also to help them to live as true Christians.

G. Difficulties. The path of student evangelism in China is by no means strewn with roses. We have a number of difficulties

which make the task exceedingly attractive and which demand our best and our highest consecration. We wish to mention one outstanding difficulty, which is the lack of adequate leadership. Comparing our present leadership in both number and quality with that of even a few years ago, we may seem to have no ground for dissatisfaction. When we compare our leadership with the opportunities, however, we have good reason to feel its inadequacy, and its incompetence, too. Leadership is lacking along every line, in personal work, in Bible-study classes, in producing the right kind of literature, in leading the evangelistic meetings, in organisation, and in such follow-up work by the pastors as will meet the needs of the student class. We are multiplying and improving our agencies for the training of Christian leadership as quickly as possible. Meanwhile we are praying that God will evoke the much-needed leadership in us, and that He will also send us consecrated leadership from other countries. The field is white unto the harvest, and the labourers are very few. Here are the challenging opportunities, the hard-won experiences, and the tested methods. Who will respond?

## Why I Believe That Christ Is Still Able to Satisfy the Yearnings of Students

By HENRI BOIS

*(Translation from the French)*

WHY do I believe that Christ is capable of satisfying the aspirations of students? Because in the first place I believe that Christ is always the same, yesterday, to-day, and forever, and that He meets all the eternal aspirations of the human soul. There is an essential and profound harmony between the human soul and Christ. It is in Christ that the fundamental needs of light, of peace, of pardon, of the ideal, of energy, of further progress have for the past nineteen centuries found satisfaction. Nothing indicates that these needs are to-day about to disappear or will ever be capable of disappearing from the human soul or that any one is on the point of discovering elsewhere than in Christ that wherewith to satisfy them better than He has done.

Astonishment is sometimes expressed that Christians can believe that Jesus Christ will never be outgrown,—that they can

admit that men have still to seek their life in a Galilean workman of the time of Caesar Augustus, in a workman who lived nineteen centuries before the invention of dirigibles and of aeroplanes. This standstill or this apparent recoil, even, from evolution seems inadmissible. But is it not a false idea of evolution to imagine that it must always involve everything in a universal and constant state of flux? If all the truth is in constant change, there is no longer any truth. If all good is constantly changing, there is no longer any good. The evolution of the race applies in all domains of true acquisition. It is impossible to see why in the moral and religious domains there could not be acquisitions which do not retard progress but upon which the possibility of new steps in progress depends. Christ has brought to humanity a new quality of life which can and must unfold its applications and its consequences, but on the condition of developing ceaselessly from its first never-failing source,—which gushes forth in life eternal, and which is and always will be—the Christ.

The fact is that for the past twenty centuries Christ has not been outgrown and that each year it is perceived afresh that His teaching not only is far from having been put into practice but is far from having been understood in its entirety, and that evolution consists in bringing to light more and more fully and in developing all that which this incomparable teaching enfolds. And each day it is perceived also that the mystery of His unique personality is far from having been completely revealed or from having had free scope in exercising over other human personalities His profound, transforming influence.

What competition might Jesus then have to fear? Are not the only religions which besides His have conserved a propagating force, Mohammedanism and Buddhism, really incapable of standing the test of comparison with the religion of Christ, from the point of view either of the historical results identified with their influence or of the wealth and purity of the sources of life which they make accessible? Would the prize have to be awarded to any one of the modern conceptions which present themselves under mystic or philosophic forms: spiritualism, scientism, positivism, pessimism, Tolstoyism, Nietzscheism? Or will not these systems, like all the others which have had their day,—soon reveal their insufficiency either through intolerable



inner contradictions or through grave deficiencies? For these other systems are all more or less artificial intellectual constructions, or even when they are more specifically religious intuitions, they have issued from hearts of a purity manifestly inferior to that of Jesus. Will it not be necessary to recognise definitely that the few pregnant elements by which they have been able to satisfy certain souls were, if not always simple borrowings from the Gospel of Christ, at least the germs of life which could not fully expand save in the rays of that life-producing Sun?

To tell the truth, that which Christ has given the world before all else is Himself. Christ did not give the world a system of philosophy, or a moral sophistry, or a political programme, or a social doctrine, but His own person, the organ of the most intimate communion with God, the source of the purest and most fruitful life. After supplying for nineteen centuries inexhaustible moral sustenance to races and individuals of every character, in the midst of the most varied historical circumstances and of infinitely diverse degrees of culture, Jesus is still offering Himself to us with all the wealth of His personality. In Him we find the reconciliation of ourselves with God, we find peace of soul, purification of the will, the flame of love, the firm hope of the elevation of our race and of its ultimate arrival at the goal which our conscience claims for it as much as our heart, in a word, all the forces of an active and wholesome life.

Complete and definite certainty obtains only in the realm of direct and personal experience. To those who lay before me this question: Why is it that I believe that Christ is still capable of satisfying the aspirations of students? I cannot respond better in fact than by saying: Those who have found in communion with Jesus the communion with the true God know that though there remains to them the necessity of much growth, without doubt, in order to attain all the development consistent with the eternal life, the seed which they have received in their hearts is that of the eternal life; they know that He through whose mediation they have received it is the Living One *par excellence*; that differing in this respect from all the great men whose beneficent influence we recall with gratitude, He alone, whilst all the others are active after death only through their memory, is truly present and personally active, thanks to that

perfect unity of His being with God. Those who have undergone this experience believe because they know that their Saviour, to use the language of the Apostle Paul, was not only a "Living Soul," but that He is eternally "Spirit," a "Quickening Spirit."

I believe that Christ is more capable than ever of satisfying the aspirations of students and that He has before Him, if the disciples of Christ do not make any obstacles, chances of success which He has never had until now.

In the first place, it is certain that the work of historical criticism and of reflection has shaken the traditional doctrinal beliefs and that the orthodox doctrines which were formerly current and seemed to constitute the very skeleton of Christianity are now in ruins in many minds. I know that some excellent Christians are troubled. In spite of this, however, can one still have confidence in the vitality of Christ? I consider for my part that this doctrinal confusion may have a good and happy effect: that of dissolving the dialectic Christ with whom we have so often had a tendency to confuse Him, the Christ of the Churches, of the doctrines, of the creeds, even of true and good ones in their sphere, in order to raise up Him Himself in the forefront. Christ and the soul: the soul and Christ. Yes, this apparent disorganisation of doctrines can permit the Christ to free Himself from all encumbrances and permit souls to pass again through the experience of St. Paul and to say to themselves with a new truth and sincerity that which so many Christians have said with their lips: "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ." I consider that in the measure in which the disciples of Christ succeed in gaining more confidence in the intrinsic virtue of Christ, in presenting Him, Him alone, in His simplicity and in His power, they will succeed at the same time in reaching the souls of young people who are weary in advance, *ad nauseam*, of the dogmas and doctrines where they find but shifting sand, and subtleties, perhaps vital formerly when a certain mentality prevailed but to-day dead,—while Christ Himself still lives! It has been for me a blessed experience in my work in the midst of the Student Christian Federation to discover to what extent direct testimony rendered not to certain doctrines relative to Christ but to Christ Himself is more powerful than ever to conquer souls.

It is not that I consider desirable in itself the intellectual disarray in which we find ourselves to-day in religious and theological matters. But I believe that which must characterise the new theology toward which the present period of transition is leading us, is the increasingly clear distinction between what is accessory and what is essential, and the distinction between what is pure theological elaboration and what is vital and personal foundation, the supremacy being given before everything else to the living person of the Christ of history, of the Christ of Christian experience, to Christ, the great, the eternal Contemporary.

While we await the eventual formation of this new, essential, Christocentric theology which will guard against putting on the same basis theological elaborations and the spiritual life of Christ Himself, meantime the immense service which has been rendered us and which is still being rendered us in increasing measure by the work of history, criticism, and philosophy is that of liberating the Christ from the bonds of dogma with which He has been so often confined, in order to permit Him to show Himself as radiating beauty, eternal newness, and divine splendour. Is there a sincere and upright human soul, which, when placed in the presence of the true Christ, living and real, could resist His attraction?

This attraction of Christ outside and above theologies and doctrines is exercised in a particularly intense and decisive manner upon students, upon young people, precisely because they are young and have not had the time to become petrified in forms of thought which fell into disuse long ago, upon intellectual young people who wish to sacrifice none of their independence and of their sincerity of thought, of their intellectual liberty, of what they consider as an inalienable patrimony, acquired for all time, to a religion which is presented to them as narrowly depending upon inert things, as irremediably bound to corpses, but who tremble and vibrate in the finest and most intimate chords of their being when one succeeds in placing them truly in the presence of the living Christ in all His magnetic power.

Beautiful is the task and great the responsibility of the Student Federation. It is incumbent upon it through its principles, its methods, its spirit, to present to the souls of students in His essential and profound simplicity, the Christ, not a name, a dogma,



an abstraction, but above all the speculations and all the creeds, above all the Churches and the sometimes important but uninteresting diversities which separate them, the living Christ, a being, a person, an incomparable *ego*, who without becoming imprisoned or exhausted in them, overflows and transcends all the attempts at formulation, the Christ who can open to them a career of infinite development with eternal perspectives.

For still another reason the Christ seems to me more capable than ever of satisfying the aspirations of the students of to-day. One of the most intense of these aspirations on the morrow of the frightful war which has laid waste to humanity is that such a cataclysm shall never come again. That is one of the most powerful and most universally widespread aspirations, I believe, in all the countries. Even during the war many among the combatants were sustained by the desire, the hope, that in reality they were making war on war, and that this war must be and would be the last. And this desire, this hope, form now and henceforth an integral part of the most ardent wishes of the youth of the present time. Alas, if one remains on the human plane, if one considers the acts, the dealings, the declarations of the diplomats, one is surprised and alarmed to note the sowings of hatred and of war which have been and are being made at each instant in the soil of humanity by sowers whose hands are full. What will be the future? What will be the sombre destiny of humanity? If the recent war was horrible, what will the future wars be? But one possible hope remains for international peace and that is that people decide to take seriously the Christ, to make a trial of the Christ.

Only the Christ can respond to these aspirations for true peace which prevail among all young people and especially among those who have participated in the war. If one succeed in showing them in the Christ the Master who in causing justice and love to prevail in the individual can also make justice and love prevail truly in the relations of societies and of nations, the souls of the young people will be won to Him. If one makes them understand that the Christ has never been fully followed, never fully heeded, that even the least faithless of the churches has nevertheless been lamentably unfaithful, that if the Christ has reigned partially in numerous individuals, He has never reigned in nations, in the social and political life of humanity, that the day

when He began to do so would be the dawn of a new, unheard-of life, that the beautiful days of Christ are not behind us in the past but that they are before us in the future,—then the souls of students will turn toward Him who has said, not only to individuals but to nations: "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you."

Great is the task of the Federation, unique indeed. Upon the fidelity and upon the love which it will devote to the accomplishment of its mission depend the destinies of humanity. The hour is particularly grave and solemn. It is for us not to allow it to be lost; for students are more accessible to Christ than they have ever been before, if one knows how to show Him to them.

## Can Jesus Christ Satisfy the Hunger of Students To-Day?

By BERTHA CONDÉ

STUDENTS have ever been ambitious—but never more so than now. Life is so full of possibilities that we are restless with desire for achievement and almost resent the long years of intellectual preparation. Everything in the world outside fires our imagination. The yearning for power, social reconstruction, and opportunities for self-realisation command all our attention. We hunger and thirst for new remedies for our social ills and are impatient with the traditions of the past. In their zest for research and debate many students dull for a time that elemental hunger for God which is in the soul of us all. There are so many plausible ways of satisfying our desires other than by accepting that challenge of Jesus Christ: "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me . . . and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

There are other students, too, whose minds are so crowded with problems to be solved and decisions to be made that there is no room for other thoughts about God. They do not wish to be discourteous, but the pressure of life is too great, they urge, and its demands are too complex for them to recognise that the revelation of God in the past is of supreme importance.

And yet, there are students in all lands, as the existence of the Federation proves, who are sure that the Jesus Christ of history is the one fact with which, inevitably, all men must reckon; the

master key which unlocks all the doors of life; and the bread which satisfies all the longings of the human heart. We shall have failed to read history aright if we minimise His importance.

The world of affairs is fast passing into the control of our generation. Even if with the strength of our youth we bring many changes to pass, we know well that any process of evolution demands that we hold fast to all that the past has gained at the same time that we add something for the future. We do well to remember that the life and teachings of Jesus have stamped the history of twenty centuries. All that we have inherited of progress has come in His wake and through the flaming enthusiasm of His disciples. Have we anything better than Him to offer? How else do we propose to satisfy human hearts to-day?

From what I know of the lives of students, I believe that a fresh discovery of Jesus Christ will satisfy their hunger of mind and heart as nothing else can do. If we should push through the mists of the centuries, and the walls of our prejudice and ignorance, and determine to have for ourselves a fresh, close view of the real Christ, we would fall down and worship Him as the end of all our desire. There are certain things about Him that we students appreciate. Our training has fitted us to discern true values which the unthinking world ignores.

It is at this very point, first of all, that Jesus Christ can satisfy us. We need a plumb-line to test our constructive thinking. As a matter of fact, even the man of the world judges his neighbour by the degree to which he fulfills or comes short of the principles of Jesus Christ. One of the hardest things to bear about the terrible war years was the fact that we were testing every nation by the standard of Christ and could not reconcile ourselves to the discrepancies that were revealed. We had been content with human standards until we saw them suddenly detached from the transcendent ideal of Christ and then we saw true values. We had seen things grey before, then suddenly we saw them black and white. If future days are to know the truth, it will be because students now dare to face the white light of the principles of Jesus Christ, and re-value the thinking and doing of the world in relation to that light. Perhaps the serene content of some of us is dangerous. We are satisfied now with some little philosophy of life or social theory that we have worked out. Unless it is



truly the mind of Christ, it will be a dim light hiding from us the full revelation that we seek. Our mental integrity demands that we test our conclusions by the highest wisdom. Whatever else we may think of Him, the Jesus of the Gospel records is the great specialist in the realm of character and human personality, and it is not wise to ignore Him.

Jesus Christ will also satisfy all students who are close to humanity and all its needs. He, too, is in the thick of life and His great concern is for a society in which there should be the redemption of all. In these days when we are yearning for a new social order, and a righting of ancient wrongs, we find new courage for our task when we read again the first public declaration of Jesus, "The spirit of the Lord is upon me because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor; He hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised." His ideal for society is one in which those who bear the brunt of things shall have help and a chance for life. He identifies Himself with all those who are in prison, who are sick, naked, hungry, and thirsty; and He judges the world by what it does to the least of these, His brethren. Thousands of people to-day who have embraced the gospel of a new social order are struggling on alone, unaware of an unseen Christ who long ago led the way for human liberty and who can satisfy us, and empower every one of us for the task of making a new world.

Of all the conceptions of God which have held the mind of man, the conception of God in Jesus Christ is the only one which can satisfy our hunger for understanding and love. In Jesus Christ alone do we see God as a Father who is touched with the feeling of our weaknesses. Sacrifice is not exacted by God for His pleasure, but it is a principle of character in which both God and man share alike. It is the laying down of life for love's sake; for "he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." It is the principle of unselfishness—that puts the good of others first. It binds us into oneness with God and makes love the very breath of life. We students need this God of Jesus Christ. The generation in which we live is torn by the clash of human wills, by the struggles of one ambitious group against another. Who or what can deliver us and give us peace? Only the God whom we see in the face of

Him who said, "I came not to do my own will but the will of Him that sent me"; "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again." Who are to be fit to lead this new generation? Those students who dare to make the same declaration, who care more for the good of others than for their own gain; who say no to self and follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ.

But there are other needs in our hearts which our Lord alone can satisfy. We realise this all too well when we struggle against sin. What is sin? We may have different theories about it, but we know at least that it is an active will which breaks relationships; it is an energy which defeats our best desires. It is the ugly fact in human life with which we all must reckon. It requires a God to control it. He alone can overcome that energy and redeem those broken relationships and fulfill those holy desires. Sin is the self-energy opposed to the selfless life. I want my way; therefore I kill. I want to defend myself; therefore I lie. I want something for myself; therefore I envy and steal. And over against this we hear the words of Jesus as He faces Calvary, "Not my will, but Thine be done," and we see there a Saviour who can redeem us from the self-energy of sin as we receive into our hearts that sacrificial principle which was perfectly manifested by His death on the cross. A new life is open to us because "He died for all that they who live should no longer live unto themselves but unto Him who for their sakes died and rose again." We must first see the Redeemer ourselves and thus become able to help others see Him, or the students of the world will fight an unequal battle and lose the goal of all their purest desire.

The personality of Jesus Christ has always been irresistible to students because He never thwarts their intellectual quest. All the mysteries of truth are open to them. "Come and see" is the way He meets questions. His is the inductive method of the laboratory. "If any man willeth to *do* his will, he shall know of the teaching whether it is of God, or whether I speak from myself," is His challenge. His patience in answering questions was unvarying even when enemies caviled. He satisfied inquiring minds as human teachers seldom do. He dared to look squarely at traditions and separate the true from the false. He was the despair of the religious teachers of His day because His mind was



fearless in its scrutiny of their dogmas. His Spirit of truth is at our side even now, ready to lead us also into all the truth. We need never fear any fact or revelation, for Jesus Christ bids all men to open wide the doors of both mind and heart; indeed, all the splendours of modern science have been unlocked to men who have imbibed His Spirit. It is an anomaly that there should be students who do not own Jesus as Master in the realm of truth.

The programme, also, of our Lord is vast enough to test the mettle of the most valiant student. He expects us to do His works also, to plant His principles in the heart of every man, woman, and child throughout the earth. He has entrusted us with the privilege of demonstrating His power in making a new world, in unfolding the mysteries of the wisdom of God. Working together with Him there is a career for us all. There are endless ways of using all our ability as ambassadors of God. The exhilaration of a great task has always appealed to students. Never were there greater tasks than now. With all the resources of the boundless power of our Christ who says, "All power is mine in heaven and on earth, therefore go . . . I am with you always," what student can say that the Christian life is restricted and limited? It is His purposes which are restricted by our limitations. The Lord needs bold men for great tasks!

It is the universal response which Jesus Christ wins from all lands and nations that demonstrates to some students His universal adequacy. In Him all men become brothers and partake of the same holy spirit and self-denying disposition; they actually love one another. As a woman, I know that in the Christ alone has all womanhood (that one-half of the human race) any hope for self-realisation. In Him not alone does every tribe and tongue become kin to all others, but male and female also stand together, one in their hope for an endless life. It is an unspeakable privilege to see this universal Christ, in miniature as it were, in the fellowship of our Federation. We who have felt the pulsing of the life of our Lord, in that intimate circle of the nations, know in a peculiar way that Jesus Christ, and He alone, can satisfy the hunger of the human heart. Would that the students of the world might give Him the chance to prove it!